REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated November 8, 2006. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and further examination of the patent application pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.111.

Summary of the Examiner's Rejections

Claims 3 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 (first paragraph) as failing to comply with the written description requirement because the claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claims 1-3, 7-11, 15-16 and 26-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bellman (US 4,572,611) (incorporating by reference Stookey (US 2,628,160)) in view of Borrelli (US 5,062,877).

Summary of Amendment

Applicants have canceled Claims 17-25 (without prejudice), amended Claims 1, 3, 9 and 11 and added Claims 28-29 to more particularly define the present invention.

Remarks regarding the §112 (first paragraph) rejections

Applicants have amended dependent Claims 3 and 11 to recite where the lens array/glass composite plate has lenses formed therein which have sag heights that are 46.2μm - 187μm. The support for this amendment can be found in TABLE 3A of the patent application. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the removal of these rejections.

Remarks regarding the §103(a) rejections

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention as recited in amended independent Claims 1 and 9 is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Bellman, Stookey and/or Borrelli. The amended independent Claims 1 and 9 recite the following:

> 1. (Currently Amended) A lens array, comprising:
> a photosensitive glass plate having a silicate glass composition with at least the following elements:
> SiO_2 (65-85wt%)
> Li_2O (8-11wt%)
> Al_2O_3 (2-7wt%)

CeO_2 (0.01-0.05wt%) and including a photosensitive agent comprising:
Ag (0.0005-0.005wt%)
wherein when the photosensitive glass plate is subjected to an exposure step, an approximately 615°C heat treatment step and a prolonged ion exchange step it becomes a glass composite plate that includes a plurality of glass regions which are lenses and at least one opal region located around the lenses (emphasis on the main distinguishing limitations).

9. (Currently Amended) A method for making a lens array, said method comprising the steps of:

placing a photomask over a non-exposed photosensitive glass plate having a silicate glass composition with at least the following elements:

SiO_2 (65-85wt%)
Li_2O (8-11wt%)
Al_2O_3 (2-7wt%)
CeO_2 (0.01-0.05wt%) and including an amount of a photosensitive agent comprising:
Ag (0.0005-0.005wt%);

exposing the photomask and selected regions in the non-exposed photosensitive glass plate to an ultraviolet light;

heating the exposed photosensitive glass plate to about 615°C to form therein a plurality of glass regions and at least one opal region; and

ion exchanging the heated photosensitive glass plate to create said lens array, wherein said lens array is a glass composite plate where the plurality of glass regions are lenses and the at least one opal region is located around the lenses (emphasis on the main distinguishing limitations).

28. (New) A lens array, comprising:

a photosensitive glass plate having a silicate glass composition with at least the following elements:

SiO_2 (65-85wt%)
Li_2O (8-11wt%)
Al_2O_3 (2-7wt%)
CeO_2 (0.01-0.05wt%) and including a photosensitive agent comprising:
Au (0.005-0.015wt%)

wherein when the photosensitive glass plate is subjected to an exposure step, an approximately 615°C heat treatment step and a prolonged ion exchange step it becomes a glass composite plate that includes a plurality of glass regions which are lenses and at least one opal region located around the lenses (emphasis on the main distinguishing limitations).

29. (New) A method for making a lens array, said method comprising the steps of:

placing a photomask over a non-exposed photosensitive glass plate having a silicate glass composition with at least the following elements:

SiO_2 (65-85wt%)
Li_2O (8-11wt%)
Al_2O_3 (2-7wt%)
CeO_2 (0.01-0.05wt%) and including an amount of a photosensitive agent comprising:
Au (0.005-0.015wt%);

exposing the photomask and selected regions in the non-exposed photosensitive glass plate to an ultraviolet light;

heating the exposed photosensitive glass plate to about 615°C to form therein a plurality of glass regions and at least one opal region; and

ion exchanging the heated photosensitive glass plate to create said lens array, wherein said lens array is a glass composite plate where the plurality of glass regions are lenses and the at least one opal region is located around the lenses (emphasis on the main distinguishing limitations).

The Applicant's respectfully submit that Bellman, Stookey and/or Borrelli fail to disclose the claimed lens array which is made from a photosensitive glass plate with a silicate glass composition that contains among other elements a photosensitive agent Ag (0.0005-0.005wt%) (or Au (0.005-0.015wt%)) and was heat-treated to about/approximately 615°C (e.g., support for these limitations can be found in TABLE 2 and page 5, lines 20-25 in the patent application). To support this assertion, reference is made to the enclosed Section 1.132 Affidavit by Dr. Nicholas F. Borrelli, a Corporate Fellow for Research and Inorganic Technologies at Corning, Incorporated. Dr. Borrelli is particularly well suited to address the differences between the present invention and the cited references Bellman, Stookey and/or Borrelli, because he is widely recognized for his knowledge and expertise in the area of physics and optics of glass and materials. In view of the foregoing amendment and 1.132 Affidavit, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of amended independent Claims 1 and 9 and the new independent Claims 28-29 and the associated dependent Claims 2-3, 7-8, 10-11, 15-16 and 26-27.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds of the rejections have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of all outstanding rejections and allowance of pending Claims 1-3, 7-11, 15-16 and 26-29.

Applicants have used a credit card to pay the $ 520.00 fee for the one-month extension of time and two new independent Claims 28-29. If this is incorrect, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees which may be required for this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-1481.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 8, 2007

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